

Action Item 2.1.4: Coordinate with the FDOT and FDEP on design standards for new development and redevelopment that will require sidewalks or encouraged installation of sidewalks, bike paths and pedestrian ways so that all sites throughout the corridor are linked with respect to function and design.

Action Item 2.1.5: Continue to coordinate with the FDOT and FDEP on roadway signage and landscaping to encourage a design motif that fits the Key Largo community.

Action Item 2.1.6: Identify and evaluate options for removal of billboards from the US-1 corridor through purchase or other means.

Strategy 2.2

Adopt a guiding site plan for each focal area that attempts to coordinate access, movement, parking and landscaping issues in a manner that promotes a Key Largo visual character and maximum use-ability.

Action Item 2.2.1: Adopt a conceptual layout for appropriate infill of the Downtown Key Largo focal area. Ensure that the County's regulatory and planning framework enables the plan, including:

- a. Appropriate zoning of individual properties for the envisioned range of uses.
- b. Appropriate allowable densities and intensities for the envisioned range of uses.
- c. Flexibility in bulk regulations, shared service areas (e.g., parking and loading) and other site planning regulations to accommodate the Downtown Key Largo Community Center design.
- d. Architectural guidelines that encourage development that is in keeping with the vision for the area and that, while generally reliant on recommendations, coordinate closely with regulatory standards for easy implementation.
- e. Identification of opportunities for public/private partnerships including site access improvements and the installation of landscaping and other common area improvements.
- f. Evaluation of the stormwater runoff conditions and recommendations for resolving drainage problems.

Action Item 2.2.2: Adopt a conceptual layout for appropriate infill of the Tradewinds focal area. Ensure that the County's regulatory and planning framework enables the plan including:

- a. Appropriate zoning of individual properties for the envisioned range of uses.

- b.* Appropriate allowable densities and intensities for the envisioned range of uses.
- c.* Flexibility in bulk regulations, shared service areas (e.g., parking and loading) and other site planning regulations to accommodate the Tradewinds Community Center design.
- d.* Possible development of architectural guidelines to be encouraged (not necessarily required) and mechanisms to make the guidelines coordinate closely with regulatory standards for easy implementation.
- e.* Identification of opportunities for public/private partnerships (e.g., waiving or reducing impact fees) for building of infrastructure, installation of landscaping and other common area improvements.
- f.* Acquisition of remaining vacant lands within the community center including hammock parcels north and south of Tradewinds Shopping Center and parcels east of Hibiscus Park. Clean up and restore these areas and incorporate them into the design plan.

Action Item 2.2.3: Adopt a conceptual layout for redevelopment and infill of the Welcome Center Focal Area. Ensure that the County's regulatory and planning framework enables the plan including:

- a.* Appropriate zoning of individual properties for the envisioned range of uses.
- b.* Appropriate allowable densities and intensities for the envisioned range of uses.
- c.* Flexibility in bulk regulations, shared service areas (e.g., parking and loading) and other site planning regulations to accommodate the design.
- d.* Possible development of architectural guidelines to be encouraged (not necessarily required) and mechanisms to make the guidelines coordinate closely with regulatory standards for easy implementation.
- e.* Identification of opportunities for public/private partnerships (e.g., waiving or reduction of impact fees) for building of infrastructure, installation of landscaping and other common area improvements.

Action Item 2.2.4: Adopt a final site and building design plan for the Government and Cultural Center Area that promotes the efficient use of the new government and cultural center property for the maximum enjoyment of the residents of Key Largo.

Action Item 2.2.5: Adopt building design guidelines for each of the focal areas that fit the desired types of uses, layout and character of each center.

Action item 2.2.6: Consider providing signage that clearly marks the transition from the Key Largo area to the Tavernier area and coordinate it with the Tavernier planning efforts.

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GOAL THREE

PROTECT AND ENHANCE HISTORIC, CULTURAL AND ARCHEOLOGICAL RESOURCES WITHIN KEY LARGO TO MAINTAIN THE INTEGRITY OF THE COMMUNITY'S UNIQUE CHARACTER.

Current Conditions Summary

As of 2005, there are 13 structures within the planning area that are considered significant as historic structures. Several other buildings in the area are older than 50 years of age but have not been inventoried or evaluated.

Analysis of Community Needs

There is a need to inventory and evaluate the remaining structures within the planning area that are older than 50 years to determine if the owner should be encouraged to apply for historic designation. These structures should be periodically monitored regardless of their status. In addition, local historians and librarians should be actively engaged in the promotion of the history of the area through the heritage trail, development of community design standards, cultural events and other activities promoting the history of the Key Largo area.

Recommended Strategies and Actions

Strategy 3.1

Continue to review and inventory potential building or site resources that may reach the 50-year age threshold or that are significant for other reasons relevant to local history and culture within the planning area.

Action Item 3.1.1: Using the GAI survey and the Monroe County Property Appraiser's parcel data, update the list of built sites that are 50 years or older and evaluate the sites for potential historic or cultural significance.

Action Item 3.1.2: Using local resources (library, local historians), identify and inventory all structures (regardless of age) and non-built sites of historical and cultural significance in the planning area.

Strategy 3.2

Encourage the preservation and enhancement of identified historic and cultural resources to promote Key Largo's community character.

Action Item 3.2.1: Encourage owners of significant structures to apply for historic designation through the existing Monroe County process. Review the "Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings" which provide the current guidance for maintenance, alteration and

redevelopment of these structures and refine these standards as needed to be consistent with historical structures and sites in Key Largo.

Action Item 3.2.2: Establish an identification system within the Monroe County building permit tracking for historic and contributing properties in order to ensure the protection and proper maintenance of such properties.

Action Item 3.2.3: Coordinate with the FDOT and FDEP to incorporate informational media on historical and cultural resources and special places in Key Largo, where appropriate, through educational signage, brochures and other means.

Strategy 3.3

Expand availability of sites for holding cultural events by incorporating an indoor auditorium and investigating creation of an outdoor performance space into the Government and Cultural Center focal area plan and explore additional opportunities for expanding the availability of space for cultural events.

6. HOUSING ELEMENT



GOAL FOUR

MAINTAIN THE AVAILABILITY OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND WORKFORCE HOUSING FOR LOCAL RESIDENTS WHILE PRESERVING THE CHARACTER OF THE COMMUNITY.

Current Conditions Summary

Affordability of housing for working residents in the Florida Keys has received significant attention in the last few years. Monroe County's land development regulations have defined affordable housing and provided limited incentives for its development for many years. These regulations were aimed at providing housing for lower wage earners such as service workers, unskilled laborers, minimum wage earners and single-earner households. The annual income for these workers has historically met the criteria to allow them to qualify for affordable housing as defined in the MCC. The most that a single household can earn and still qualify for affordable housing is 120% of the county's median monthly household income

Until recently, housing availability for workers earning more than 120% of the median county income was fairly good, especially non-waterfront housing. Households edging out of the affordable category include professional salaried workers, skilled workers/tradesmen and two-income households. These families may easily earn \$90,000 per year or more annually but are generally below \$200,000 per year in earnings. With the recent rapid changes in the real estate values in the Florida Keys the typical dry-lot single family home often purchased by this group is now out of their projected affordable price range based on income. The steady availability of low mortgage interest rates especially over the past few years and the controlled allocation of permits for new residential units in the Keys have combined to make house prices increase at alarming rates. Data from Tri-Services Multiple Listing Service shows that the average price of a non-waterfront single family home in the Keys rose to \$774,000 in the first quarter of 2005, a 35% increase over first quarter average price of 2004¹. While the market may not be able to continue to sustain price increases at this rate, it is clear that household income for the "workforce" group has not experienced a concurrent increase at a rate sufficient to qualify them for basic housing, even with the lower interest rates. The availability of 100% financing, no down payment, and other such options available in this volatile market make for an unstable situation for these families even if they qualify.

Units qualifying as "affordable" under the MCC must meet regulations listed under Section 9.5-266 and other sections of the MCC. Not the least of these regulations is the requirement for the affordable unit to remain affordable (i.e., available to qualifying families) for 50 years from the time it is established.

The term "workforce housing" is commonly used to refer to housing units that employees working in Monroe County could qualify to purchase or those units which are currently owned by members of the County's workforce.

¹ Coldwell Banker Schmitt Real Estate Company; www.realestatefloridakeys.com

The market-rate housing that our existing workforce has been utilizing has no such restrictions and is now being lost. Units that were purchased by members of the workforce prior to the dramatic increase in housing prices are being sold at the highest possible market price. Houses sold at the highest market price will not likely be available to new members of the workforce who may not be able to purchase the unit at the higher market price.

Another aspect of housing that must be considered for the Key Largo planning area is the fact that a considerable percentage of the lower-wage worker group is bussed in daily from Miami-Dade County via public and private transportation. Some local businesses (especially hotels) provide daily van transportation for their employees. The primary means of transit however is the JGT Bus Service which is a contracted extension of the Miami-Dade County Public Transit System. A total of 168,000 persons used the system in 2004, averaging 500 persons per day. The service currently runs to MM 50 however a connector line has been put into place to complete the service to Key West. This mass transit system is expected to continue to experience a high level of use and, with a significant number of housing units being constructed in south Miami-Dade County, will offer an alternative to workers who otherwise would require housing in the Keys. Key Largo is expected to continue to have a significant contingent of lower-income wage earners commuting from outside the County.

Analysis of Community Needs

Existing Housing Stock. Many of the housing units owned or rented by the resident workforce are not deed-restricted affordable housing, however these units have traditionally housed the workforce. These units should be retained through various mechanisms where possible. It would also be helpful to determine and monitor how businesses are meeting their employee needs such as through the hiring of commuters from Miami-Dade County or through the provision of employee housing.

Creation of Affordable Housing. Affordable workforce housing should be created within the planning area. Opportunities for the creation of this type of housing County-wide are being explored now. Some options include developer-supplied employee housing and County-sponsored housing programs.

Recommended Strategies and Actions

Strategy 4.1

Maintain and improve the existing stock of affordable housing.

Action Item 4.1.1: Inventory the existing affordable and workforce housing stock within the Key Largo planning area, including government housing, units that are legally bound to affordable standards, neighborhoods and developments that have traditionally housed workers, and employee housing (both on and off employer premises).

Action Item 4.1.2: Provide incentives to developers to retain affordable units by awarding dwelling unit allocations for building elsewhere.

Strategy 4.2

Enable and promote the creation of affordable and workforce housing.

Action Item 4.2.1: Require new developments to supply or fund employee, affordable and workforce housing in return for receiving dwelling unit or commercial floor space allocations.

Action Item 4.2.2: Create incentives for the incorporation of employee housing in redeveloping properties, especially in Community Centers.

Action Item 4.2.3: Explore the possibility of County-sponsored housing on County-owned land either through a type of land trust arrangement, traditional rental, or other means.

Action Item 4.2.4: Determine to the extent possible the demographics of commuting workers in the Key Largo planning area including typical job types, income levels, residency, hours of work, turnover rates and other useful statistics. Update the information periodically to gauge the level of dependency of the Key Largo economy on commuting workers.

7. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ELEMENT



GOAL FIVE
PRESERVE, MANAGE, AND RESTORE WHERE APPROPRIATE, THE
NATURAL RESOURCES WITHIN THE PLANNING AREA BY
PROVIDING OPEN SPACE, PROTECTING WATER QUALITY AND
ACQUIRING AND MANAGING ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE
LANDS.

Current Conditions Summary

Approximately 50% (2,630 acres) of the parcel coverage in the planning area is within developed and disturbed lands including rights-of-way. Another 1,815 acres (about 34% of the planning area) is within wetlands and submerged lands. These areas have been off limits to development for several years in Monroe County. The remaining 16% of the parcel coverage within the planning area (about 819 acres) is within tropical hardwood hammock habitat. With wetlands being off limits, hardwood hammock habitat is the most vulnerable to development and clearing.

Acquisition of tropical hardwood hammock and wetlands in the area is actively ongoing. The two main acquisition agencies working within the planning area at this time are the State of Florida and the Monroe County Land Authority. In December 2004 the State of Florida added over 6,000 parcels throughout the Keys to their priority acquisition list under the Florida Forever Program. These are parcels within the Tier I areas in the Tier System and include both uplands and wetlands. The FDEP State Lands Division is actively mapping and appraising these parcels during 2005. Offers for acquisition will be made as appropriate. The Monroe County Land Authority has been concentrating purchasing efforts mainly on uplands.

In addition to the direct acquisition of these habitats, Monroe County has addressed their protection over the years through numerous regulatory means including limits on clearing of habitat, assigning of negative points to proposed development in these habitats under the permit allocation systems, and required compensation for removal of native plants. The Tier System continues these restrictions while simplifying the process that land owners must complete to obtain a permit.

North Key Largo, adjacent to the planning area to the northeast provides prime habitat for four federally endangered species, the American crocodile, Key Largo wood rat, Key Largo cotton mouse and Schaus' swallowtail butterfly. The Florida manatee, bald eagle and wood stork are also either common in the planning area or have been documented recently. In 1997 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) began requiring endangered species consultation for development of specified habitat within the planning area. This included parcels within the planning area that contain primarily tropical hardwood hammock. Owners who want to develop these parcels must contact the FWS to determine if habitat on their parcel serves or has the potential to serve the needs of federally endangered species. A Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) under Section 10 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) could be required to develop the parcel. To date, no parcel applying for development has been deemed significant habitat and no HCPs have been required.

Key Largo also serves as habitat for several animal and plant species listed by the State of Florida as either endangered, threatened or species of special concern. Most of these species occur in wetlands and hammock habitats. Monroe County currently addresses protection of these species through the protection of their habitat including complete protection of wetlands (i.e., development prohibited) and severe restrictions on development of hardwood hammock under the Tier System.

The improvement and maintenance of good water quality is a primary goal within the planning area as it has been throughout the Florida Keys especially over the last 10 to 15 years. Establishment of the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary in 1992 was in large part a response to a perceived decline in water quality and the health of the coral reef tract along the Keys. Key Largo has long touted itself as the “dive capital of the world” and this identity has set it apart from the rest of the Keys. Monroe County, in conjunction with state and federal agencies, has worked to implement program and regulatory strategies to help improve water quality. Some of the strategies have included adoption of master plans for sewage treatment and stormwater runoff, the elimination of illegal cesspits, improved stormwater management requirements for site development, and the planning of central wastewater collection and treatment. The latter action resulted in the establishment of the Key Largo Wastewater Treatment District in June 2002, an independent utility district with an elected board. The district is responsible for planning, constructing and managing central wastewater collection and treatment for all of Key Largo, excluding Ocean Reef. Construction of a central treatment plant within the planning area is currently underway. The treatment of wastewater must meet stringent state standards for nutrient removal and it must be operational by the year 2010.

Analysis of Community Needs

Tier System/Acquisition. The Tier System needs to be adopted in order to provide a basis for the acquisition of environmentally sensitive lands. Parcels within Tier I lands have already been submitted to the State of Florida and added to the Florida Forever priority acquisition list. The County should track the State’s progress in purchasing these lands within the planning area. The County should be prepared to submit lands that fall within the definition of Tier III SPA to the State for future ranking processes and encourage acquisition of sensitive habitat within these areas. In the meantime, they should be a priority for County acquisition. This includes lands providing green space on US-1 and elsewhere and lands that can possibly be restored to enhance and expand existing habitat.

Habitat Management. One aspect of land acquisition and habitat protection that presents a difficulty in the planning area is the management of acquired lands. Due to the proliferation of platted subdivisions and roads, acquired parcels may form a fragmented patchwork of mixed habitat and disturbed areas. These areas are difficult to manage due to increased resource and manpower requirements and the fact that access/disturbance factors are almost impossible to control in some areas. In the Florida Keys, major habitat management activities include the removal of trash and debris, the removal of invasive exotic vegetation, restoration of habitat through mainly through topographic restoration, and maintenance of parcels in an exotics-free condition.

Threatened and Endangered Species. The adoption of the Tier System is intended to provide for protection of habitat while increasing landowner certainty as to the status of developability of their parcels. The recent status of FWS review of development decreases that certainty. Therefore, the County may need to explore options with the FWS including the possibility of completing a Habitat Conservation Plan for the listed species concerned within the planning area. This plan could incorporate many of the actions that the County and State are already taking such as acquisition and lower points for applications in Tier I or Tier III SPA.

Water Quality. The County is currently addressing the impacts of development on water quality through the implementation of the wastewater and stormwater master plans for the Florida Keys. The County needs to track the progress of these activities and ensure timely implementation within the planning area as well as coordinating these actions with design and roadway improvements called for in the Key Largo/US-1 Corridor Enhancement Plan.

Recommended Strategies and Actions

Strategy 5.1

Adopt the Tier System that specifies Tier I and Tier III lands and Tier III SPA for purposes of guiding development while retaining species habitat and natural areas for acquisition.

Strategy 5.2

Prepare and implement an acquisition strategy for the planning area that prioritizes highly valuable habitat first and that is coordinated with state and federal agencies.

Action Item 5.2.1: Create a basis for acquisition priorities within the planning area that considers wildlife and plant habitat and restorable area first, followed by planning priorities such as green and open space, water access or views, aesthetics and public spaces.

Action Item 5.2.2: Track the status of Tier I parcels in the planning area with respect to the Florida Forever program including the criteria upon which purchase offers are made, the locations where offers are made, the locations where lands are purchased and the final status of parcels not purchased. For parcels containing hardwood hammock on which offers were made but purchase was not completed, evaluate the importance of the parcel with respect to priority criteria for acquisition and the feasibility of a second attempt at purchase by Monroe County if the criteria warrants.

Action Item 5.2.3: Prioritize Tier III SPA according to criteria specified pursuant to Action Item 5.2.1 and implement acquisition and surplus lot reduction actions in these areas as described in Strategy 1.2.

Action Item 5.2.4: Implement acquisition of wetlands as a low priority, especially those parcels where at least one attempt at acquisition has already been made by the County or

the State. Resources should not be expended in making offers to wetlands owners but acquisition may be considered where requested by an owner.

Strategy 5.3

Create and implement a management strategy for County-owned acquisition lands aimed at maintaining and restoring native habitat.

Action Item 5.3.1: Inventory and evaluate all County-owned acquisition lands to identify and list management needs and challenges. Set up a system for monitoring of these lands and distributing contact information to the public in order to provide for immediate response to complaints and property-related problems such as illegal dumping or camping.

Action Item 5.3.2: Establish management goals and objectives for the various types of lands inventoried and evaluated under Action Item 5.3.1. The goals and objectives may be aimed at natural resources management, public access management, and other opportunities.

Action Item 5.3.3: In the management plan, include opportunities and basic plans for habitat restoration. Coordinate with Monroe County Public Works to tailor road maintenance standards in natural areas where the County retains significant lot ownership to further site management and restoration goals.

Action Item 5.3.4: Develop and carry out a work plan that implements these goals and objectives including a plan for funding and for coordinating actions with other agencies as applicable.

Strategy 5.4

Consider the development of a Habitat Conservation Plan, pursuant to Section 10 of the Endangered Species Act and in coordination with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, for the planning area that addresses the habitat needs of federal endangered species and provides greater certainty to owners of habitat with respect to development.

Strategy 5.5

Continue to ensure the implementation of the County's stormwater and wastewater master plans in order to improve water quality within the planning area. Make sure that infrastructure planning and installation is well coordinated with future plans for transportation and design changes in the planning area as guided by the Key Largo/US-1 Corridor Enhancement Plan.

8. ECONOMIC ELEMENT



GOAL SIX ENCOURAGE REDEVELOPMENT AND INFILL DEVELOPMENT THAT SUPPORTS AND ENHANCES THE TOURIST-BASED ECONOMY OF THE PLANNING AREA.

Current Conditions Summary

Touting itself as the “dive capital of the world”, Key Largo has been a significant tourist destination for the past 30 or more years. Diving and fishing are the primary tourist activities and a large retail, lodging and service economy has grown around the tourist industry. During the Key Largo LCP workshops, the community expressed a desire to enhance Key Largo’s reputation and attraction as a tourist destination, not simply as a stopover to other parts of the Keys. Planning and regulatory programs have not provided businesses with flexibility to enable them to maximize their economic viability when opportunity arises. For example, although the transferable development rights (TDR) program was intended to encourage consolidation and infill of commercial space to better serve residents and tourists, site design standards typically constrained site building layouts to the point that developers were prevented from taking advantage of the TDR program. In fact, it could often be a challenge to develop the allocated density/intensity of a site much less any additional transferred density/intensity. Regulatory constraints have also limited site design creativity that would allow for vehicular and pedestrian mobility, appropriate infill and mixed uses, and other such design features. Regulations governing the redevelopment and improvement of nonconforming uses are inflexible and provide few options.

The tourist economy depends heavily on the availability of tourist housing in transient dwelling units such as hotels, campgrounds, and rental units. The restrictions on the number of available permits in the Florida Keys along with the increasing demand for permanent and seasonal housing has caused an abrupt increase in the redevelopment of existing transient dwelling units to condominiums. While some of these condominiums will likely be marketed as rental units, the true future availability of tourist accommodations is unknown at this time. A preliminary inventory of the planning area shows that there are approximately 2,016 hotel units, rental units and campground spaces handled by approximately 40 owners or property managers. A one-year moratorium on the redevelopment of recreational vehicle parks and mobile home parks was adopted and initiated in June 2005. However, hotel units were not included in the moratorium.

Analysis of Community Needs

Design Flexibility to Retain Businesses. In order to implement design themes and achieve site planning goals for the Community Centers, Focal Areas and the remainder of the US-1 corridor, changes will be needed to provide greater flexibility to business owners to encourage appropriate redevelopment and creative design. Besides changes in bulk regulations, the nonconforming use section of the MCC should be reviewed. For Community Centers, design and density standards should encourage infill and site mobility options, especially for pedestrians. The existing regulations mainly need to be better coordinated to make the different site design standards compatible and flexible and to allow them to be tailored towards the needs of Community Centers and other infill areas.

Tourist Housing Retention. The perceived loss of tourist housing should be investigated further. Existing tourist housing should be inventoried by type. The local community and Chamber of Commerce can assist in identifying changes and trends in the availability and type of tourist housing. It is not certain at this point what, if any, action might be needed to ensure the retention of adequate tourist housing to meet future needs.

Recommended Strategies and Actions

Strategy 6.1

Retain existing desirable businesses that support the economic tourist base of the community.

Action Item 6.1.1: In reviewing the status of nonconforming commercial uses (see Strategy 1.3), the suitability of the subject property to support the local tourist economy and to provide opportunity for enhancement of community design and connectivity goals may be considered.

Action Item 6.1.2: Review the existing land development regulations pertaining to density, intensity and site design layout and nonconforming uses/structures and coordinate and update these to encourage the retention of businesses that support the tourist-based economy and the design standards of the community including increased infill and mobility in Community Centers.

Strategy 6.2

Inventory and evaluate tourist housing trends and determine what, if any, actions are needed to ensure that tourist housing of appropriate types are retained in numbers and locations adequate to meet future needs in the planning area.

GOAL SEVEN

RECOGNIZE WATER-DEPENDENT AND WATER-RELATED COMMERCIAL USES AS AN IMPORTANT SOURCE OF ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY WITHIN THE PLANNING AREA.

Current Conditions Summary

An important attractant to Key Largo is the presence of traditional waterfront businesses such as dive shops, restaurants and other such uses that are enhanced by a water location. Some of these structures are nonconforming with respect to flood zone regulations, setbacks, stormwater handling and other regulations which post-date their construction. This affects the extent to which they can be repaired or replaced if they are damaged and places limitations on improvement.

Commercial fishing in the planning area is part of the only export industry in the County. Monroe County has historically been at or near the top in revenue produced from commercial fishing when compared with all other counties in Florida. Key Largo Fisheries is a major commercial operation located south of US-1 on Ocean Bay Drive (MM 99). The only other commercial fishing area remaining in the planning area is located on Garden Cove Drive in a mixed residential and waterfront commercial area. These types of working waterfront areas are similar to some of the traditional waterfront tourist uses in that they are older properties with structures that are functionally suited to the use but may be nonconforming with respect to current regulations. They also can require significant land-based support for storage of traps and equipment and processing of the product. Again, retention of traditional working waterfront businesses such as commercial fishing operations, marinas and boatyards is desirable to support as diverse an economy as possible.

Throughout the County, many marinas are being redeveloped to private marinas serving only condominiums. A one-year moratorium on the redevelopment of working waterfront and marinas serving the public was adopted and initiated in July 2005. This trend will be studied over the next year and recommendations made on what actions local government can take to ensure the economic viability of the community. Another aspect relating to waterfront access is the presence of traditional offshore mooring areas in the Key Largo planning area. Currently, these liveaboard and cruising vessels utilize existing marinas with access to services.

The 2010 Comprehensive Plan in Objective 212.1 and Chapter 9J-5.12 of the Florida Administrative Code identified the need to inventory and consider the redevelopment of water-dependent and water-related uses. The public place a high value on water-dependant or water-related uses and their presence adds to the attraction Key Largo has on visitors.

Water-dependent uses include marinas, commercial fishing, boat launching facilities and beaches (Table 6). Water-related uses include concession stands, bait and tackle shops and fish houses. Hotels and restaurants that are located on the water while not water dependent or related as in the traditional definition are economically enhanced by the location on the water and are included in the definition here (Table 7).

Restaurant seating and bars and concessions that are located within the shoreline setbacks and on docks within the planning area are economically enhanced and dependent on their location in close proximity to the water. These uses do not conform to the current environmental protection regulations.

Table 6 Water Related and Water Dependent Commercial Uses			
Name	Land Use	Location	Primary RE #s
Oceanside Marina Inc.	Marina	E 2 nd St.	00554760
Rock Harbor Marina	Marina	36 E 2 nd St.	00554710
Rock Harbor Marina Rentals	Marina	97951 Overseas Hwy	0090650
Calypso Rest & Ocean Bay Marina	Restaurant & Marina	5 Seagate Blvd	00502320
Pilot House Restaurant & Pilot House Marina	Restaurant & Marina	13 Seagate Blvd	00502370
Key Largo Fisheries	Marina and Fish Processing	Ocean Bay Dr	00502870
Ocean Divers & Sharkey's Bar	Dive Shop, Bar and Restaurant	522 Caribbean Dr.	00453475.0135
Horizon Divers	Dive Center	100 Ocean Dr.	0453450.
Best Western	Hotel	201 Ocean Dr.	
Key Largo Harbor Marina	Marina	Ocean Dr.	00453440.0005
Tarpon Flats Inn & Marina	Hotel and Marina	29 Shoreline Dr.	00469720.
Marine Resources Development & Jules Undersea Lodge	Off shore hotel base and marina	51 Shoreline Dr.	00469430.
Koblick Marina & Hideout Restaurant	Marina	49 Shoreline Dr.	00469640.; 00469650.
Garden Cove Marina and Buzzard's Roost Restaurant	Marina & Restaurant	21 Cayman Lane	00539850.
Captain Slate's Atlantis	Dive Center	51 Garden Cove Dr.	00539700.
Travis Boat Center	Boat sales & Service	106280 Overseas Hwy	00538040.000000;
Ocean Divers		105800 Overseas Hwy	00532701.042
Rowell's Marina	Marina (closed)	104550 Overseas Hwy	00508200; 00508210.
Amoray Dive Resort	Motel	104250 Overseas Hwy	00439600.
Kelly's Motel and Dive Center	Motel, Dive Center	104220 Overseas Hwy	00439620.
Neptune's Hideaway Motel Dive and Snorkel Resort	Motel (closed)	104180 Overseas Hwy	00439630.0001
Caribbean Club	Restaurant and boat launch		00439690.000000; 00439700.000000
Black Water Marina	Marina	103950 Overseas Hwy	0084960.
Quiescence Snorkel and Diving	Dive Center	103680 Overseas Hwy	0085780.0001
Dolphin Cove	Dolphin Research	101900 Overseas Hwy	00543940.
Seafarer Resort Motel and Dive Center	Motel and Dive Center	97684 Overseas Hwy	00091010.

Table 7 Water Related/Economically Enhanced by Location on the Water			
Name	Land Use	Location	Primary RE #s
Mariners Club	Condo/hotel	O.K.	00554891
Mariners Club Rest. Mandalay Bay Marina and Tiki Bar	Restaurant & Marina	80 E 2 nd Ave.	00554740
Pilot House Restaurant & Pilot House Marina	Restaurant & Marina	13 Seagate Blvd	00502370
Marina Del Mar and Coconuts Bar and Restaurant	Hotel, Restaurant & Bar	527 Caribbean Dr.	00453475.0141
Port Largo Villas	Hotel, Condo	417 Bahia Ave.	00453475.019209
Holiday Inn	Hotel & Marina	99701 Overseas Hwy	00453440.0006
Ramada Inn	Hotel	99751 Overseas Hwy	00453440.0002
Horizon Divers	Dive Center	100 Ocean Dr.	0453450.
Best Western	Hotel	201 Ocean Dr.	
Key Largo Harbor Marina	Marina	Ocean Dr.	00453440.0005
Tarpon Flats Inn & Marina	Hotel and Marina	29 Shoreline Dr.	00469720.
North Star Resort	RV Park (closed)		00083970.
Flamingo Restaurant	Restaurant	47 Garden Cove Dr.	00539710.
Azur Del Mar	Motel	104300 Overseas Hwy	00439590.
Hobo's Marina and Restaurant	Marina & Restaurant	104200 Overseas Hwy	00439630.
Florida Bay Outfitters	Kayak sales & tours	104050 Overseas Hwy	004397100.000000
Italian Fisherman	Condo, Restaurant Closed		00439720.
Sundowner's Restaurant & Cactus Jack Bar	Restaurant & Bar		00084930.
Senior Frijoles	Restaurant	103900B Overseas Hwy	0084990.0001
Marriott Bay Beach Resort	Hotel	103800 Overseas Hwy	0085080.
Captain Jax	Trailer Resort and Marina	103650 Overseas Hwy	00085760.
King's Kamp	RV Park		00085820.
Howard Johnson's Hotel	Hotel	102400 Overseas Hwy	00543080
Largo Lodge	Motel	101740 Overseas Hwy	00492670.
Campers Cove Trailer Park	RV Park	101640	00492750.0001
Coastal Waterways	RV Park	101620 Overseas Hwy	00492800.
Largo RV Park	RV Park	101600 Overseas Hwy	00492780
Calusa Resort	RV Park		00541810.
Marr Bayside Resort	Motel	99470 Overseas Hwy	00504170.0001
Snook's Bayside	Restaurant	99470 Overseas Hwy	00504170.
Café Largo/Bayside Grill	Restaurant	99530 Overseas Hwy	00504080.
Sunset Cove Resort	Motel	99360 Overseas Hwy	00504070.
Hungry Pelican Motel	Motel	99340 Overseas Hwy	00504060.
Bay Cove Motel	Motel	99446 Overseas Hwy	00504040
North Star Resort	RV Park	99096 Overseas Hwy	0088030.
Rock Reef Lodging	Motel	98750 Overseas Hwy	00091050.
Kona Kai Resort	Motel	97802 Overseas Hwy	00052595.
Bay Harbor Lodge	Motel	97702 Overseas Hwy	00091020.
Riptide	RV Park & Marina	97680 Overseas Hwy	00091090.
America Outdoors	RV Park (being converted to hotel and restaurant)	97450 Overseas Hwy	00555010.

Analysis of Community Needs

Retain Traditional Working and Public Waterfront. The rapid changeover of traditional waterfront businesses including marinas, commercial fishing operations, restaurants, charter fleet operations and similar uses to private condominiums and marinas has been a cause for concern in the Florida Keys. A moratorium on this type of redevelopment is in effect and the matter is being studied. Recommendations should be developed to help deal with this phenomenon Keys-wide. Another need is to formalize and provide land-based support to existing offshore mooring areas within the planning area.

Design Flexibility to Retain Businesses. Key Largo would like to retain its casual water-oriented community atmosphere to help maintain its tourist-based economy. New development regulations are needed to help retain traditional waterfront businesses. These new criteria will likely include relaxation or flexibility in existing requirements for setbacks, parking, buffers, landscaping and other bulk regulations and a complete overhaul of the nonconforming use/structures sections.

Recommended Strategies and Actions

Strategy 7.1

Identify and evaluate commercial waterfront businesses that support the tourist-based economy and the traditional waterfront industries of the planning area. Provide for their preservation and continued viability where appropriate.

Action Item 7.1.1: Preserve and protect the tourist-based and working waterfront businesses such as public marinas, waterfront restaurants, charter operations, multi-use resorts, commercial fishing and boatyards through amendment of the Land Development Regulations including regulations regarding nonconforming uses and structures.

Action Item 7.1.2: Monitor the ongoing study on waterfront development and evaluate the recommendations to determine their applicability to the planning area and their potential for the retention and preservation of these types of businesses.

Action Item 7.1.3: Develop and adopt flexible design standards aimed at retaining traditional waterfront businesses to promote function, water access and over-water views. Flexibility in nonconforming use/structure standards, setbacks, parking, buffers, landscaping and other bulk regulations may be adopted to retain waterfront character and function while providing for basic safety, stormwater handling, flood protection and other concerns.

Action Item 7.1.4: Provide for mooring field development with reliable land-based support in appropriate areas of the planning area.

Action Item 7.1.5: Inventory the existing commercial uses on the shoreline and document which uses are currently within the shoreline setback.

Action Item 7.1.6: Amend the Land Development Regulations to permit existing commercial uses to remain within the shoreline setbacks as long as storm water is managed and shoreline vegetation maintained.

Action Item 7.1.7: Prohibit new commercial uses within the shoreline setback unless permitted as accessory uses.

Action Item 7.1.8: Ensure that accessory uses permitted within the shoreline setback are properly managed to protect near shore waters.

Action Item 7.1.9: Water-related, water-dependent and commercial businesses enhanced by their location on the water are of vital economic and cultural importance to Key Largo and are to be protected and enhanced through amendment of the Land Development Regulations including the development and adoption of flexible design standards aimed at retaining traditional waterfront businesses to promote function, water access and over-water views. Flexibility in nonconforming use/structure standards, setbacks, parking, buffers, landscaping and other bulk regulations may be adopted to retain waterfront character and function while providing for basic safety, stormwater handling, flood protection and other concerns.

Action Item 7.1.10: The conversion of water-related, water-dependent, and commercial businesses enhanced by their location on the water to businesses that do not similarly require location on the water, is prohibited.

Action Item 7.1.11: When creating community design standards or revising regulations, ensure that community organizations and non-profits that serve the community are not unduly burdened and can remain viable.

Action Item 7.1.12: Encourage businesses to retain existing and include new public waterfront access. Rely on the waterfront use study to formulate recommended mechanisms for encouragement.

9. TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT



GOAL EIGHT
PROVIDE RESIDENTS AND VISITORS OF THE PLANNING AREA
WITH A SAFE AND USEABLE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM FOR
VEHICLES, BICYCLES AND PEDESTRIAN WITH OPPORTUNITIES
FOR TRANSIT SYSTEMS WHERE APPROPRIATE.

Current Conditions Summary

US-1 is a State facility operating as both a through highway and a local “main street” roadway. This road must meet State concurrency requirements for traffic LOS. The Florida Keys concurrency standard is speed-based rather than volume based and requires that, at a minimum, an overall average speed of 45 miles per hour (mph) be maintained over the entire length of the island chain (from MM 112.5 to MM 4 on Stock Island) and that any individual segment not fall below 45 mph average speed. As of 2005, the Florida Keys and the Key Largo segment were in compliance with concurrency standards. As the standard is not volume-based, available surplus traffic volume can be difficult to predict in terms of numbers of added trips. However, with the projected growth anticipated for the planning area over the twenty-year planning horizon, the projected LOS is expected to be met.

Together, the Key Largo/US-1 Corridor Enhancement Plan and the Overseas Heritage Trail Master Plan lay out a basic concept of the envisioned US-1 corridor plan through the planning area. Reconfigurations to enhance the transportation corridor are proposed for the four focal areas. These designs include the use of controlled access points, frontage roads, deceleration lanes and traffic circles. The engineering feasibility of the conceptual highway designs has not yet been assessed.

Right-of-way ownership and parcel status throughout the corridor has not been studied to date. US-1 through the planning area was built upon what were previously two separate rights-of-way controlled by the Florida East Coast Railway and the old State Road Department. On older properties, buildings were often placed on or very near the property line and vehicles parking in front of a business are often wholly or partially on the right-of-way. Currently, the FDOT routinely retires surplus right-of-way through various mechanisms including transferring or selling it to adjacent property owners. This affects the current parking situation and configuration throughout the planning area.

Other general corridor deficiencies have been identified, including lack of curbs and controlled access, unsafe conditions involving potential vehicle/bicycle/pedestrian conflicts, inadequate cross walks, and other problems. These problems have not yet been specifically analyzed in detail along the corridor with respect to vehicular traffic. The Overseas Heritage Trail Master Plan does lay out specific recommendations for the bicycle/pedestrian trail in the planning area. Trail routes that cross the highway are noted at three points: Ocean Bay Drive, U.S. Post Office and Key Largo Chamber of Commerce/Welcome Center. Signalization or minimal upgrade of the existing condition is called for in the master plan. The plan also notes “points of attraction” that correspond with the Community Centers and the Welcome Center Focal Area. The plan also lays out specific design standards for all portions of the trail categorized according to the different existing right-of-way conditions found along the highway.

The transportation network in Key Largo incorporates some mass transit, such as the JGT bus line (an extension of the Miami-Dade public transit system), Monroe County Social Services, Greyhound bus line and private van pools. The latter two are limited-use facilities. Greyhound Lines has 13 stops in the Florida Keys, one of which is a limited-service stop in Key Largo. It is noted, however that this stop is located at MM 99.6 Overseas Highway, in or near the Downtown Key Largo Community Center. Van pools are used by some businesses, mainly hotels, to transport workers mainly to and from Miami-Dade County. Monroe County Social Services provides pre-arranged transportation for registered elderly and disabled clients. This service operates from 7:00 am to 6:00 pm on weekdays and is tailored to the user's origin/destination needs and schedule. The JGT bus line provides commuter service from Miami-Dade County down to MM 50 in Marathon at this time with a connector line completing service to Key West. Total ridership for 2004 was 168,000 passengers with an average of 500 per day. The bus is run on a "hail stop" model with no set locations for bus stops. However, there are identifiable locations where workers gather and the bus regularly stops, such as at the proposed Community Centers. During the community workshop discussions some participants expressed a desire for a transportation shuttle designed for use by residents and tourists to serve the planning area and link the focal areas.

Analysis of Community Needs

Corridor Design. Much of the community's discussion on improving the planning area focused on upgrading and improving the design of the US-1 corridor. It will be essential to partner with FDOT to make the most of the suggested improvements. The Key Largo/US-1 Corridor Design Plan is a first step in accomplishing the community's vision of Key Largo. Changes may involve reconfiguration of specific areas, installation or changed signalization and crosswalks, and installation of curb cuts or bicycle/pedestrian improvements along US-1. One challenge will be to accomplish these changes in a coordinated fashion over the entire planning area while ensuring that the LOS will be maintained well into the future.

In order to accomplish this, a detailed surveying and engineering study must be made of the entire corridor with specific focus on the conceptual upgrades proposed in the corridor design plan. The study must include identification of all rights-of-way, identification of existing encroachments or use, evaluation of traffic routing options for the proposed frontage road locations, incorporation of the bicycle/pedestrian movement including the design of safe crossovers and identification of opportunities for funding and implementation. The existing regular JGT transit stops and possible future transit stops for a tourist-oriented service should also be incorporated into the study to determine how they could fit into the plan.

Recommended Strategies and Actions

Strategy 8.1

Implement the transportation portions of the Key Largo/US-1 Corridor Enhancement Plan while maintaining traffic LOS standards.

Action Item 8.1.1: Conduct a detailed survey and engineering study of the conceptual design corridor plan that incorporates bicycle/pedestrian trail plans and opportunities to better service existing and planned transit systems.

Action Item 8.1.2: Immediately coordinate with the FDOT to stop all surplus right-of-way transfers until the County finishes the engineering study and evaluates them

Action Item 8.1.3: FDOT to retain right-of-way or County to secure FDOT right-of-way where deemed essential for public improvements including frontage roads, bicycle and pedestrian paths, access and buffer area.

Action Item 8.1.4: Work with the Key Largo Chamber of Commerce to explore the possibility of design and funding of a tourist-oriented local shuttle service that would connect Community Centers and Focal Areas as well as other businesses and points of interest.

Strategy 8.2

Review local roadways for opportunities to provide safer traffic and bicycle/pedestrian facilities.

10. RECREATION ELEMENT



GOAL NINE
PROVIDE ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR ENHANCEMENT OF
EXISTING RECREATIONAL FACILITIES, EXPANSION OF ACTIVE
AND PASSIVE LAND-BASED RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES AND
SEEK TO EXPAND PUBLIC SHORELINE ACCESS FOR WATER-BASED
RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR ALL AGE GROUPS WITHIN THE
COMMUNITY.

Current Conditions Summary

There are six established State and County parks in the planning area. Three are devoted primarily to active recreation and three are oriented towards water access and passive use. All but the Garden Cove site are fully developed. Key Largo is very fortunate to have numerous neighborhood parks included within their platted subdivisions. These homeowner parks provide open space, limited amenities such as picnic tables and, often, water access (including boating) to members of the areas homeowner's association. The extent of these facilities has not been inventoried. Several County roadways terminate on the shoreline (Table 8) and provide limited public access to the ocean and bay.

Table 8: County Right-of-Ways Ending at the Shoreline	
97 – 106 Oceanside	97 – 106 Bayside
Ocean Drive	Ocean Bay
Coral	Sunset
2 nd Avenue	Shore
Coco Plum	Kay
Harbor	Road E
Canal	Road D
Ocean Shores	Road F
Marina	Canal
Jones Road	Crane
Oceanview	Poinciana
Bonefish	Bonito
Bass	Summerland
Pompano	
Barracuda	
Oceana	
Taylor	
<i>SOURCE: County GIS 2005</i>	

The draft Monroe County Parks and Recreation Master Plan recommends the development of Garden Cove Park with a boat ramp and beach (shoreline) access facilities. Also, development of the Government and Cultural Center will offer limited park facilities and shoreline access for residents and tourists within the planning area.

An inventory of community organizations and services such as churches, clubs, athletic associations, and non-profit groups has not been completed. These entities also offer supplementary recreational and cultural opportunities to the community.

Analysis of Community Needs

Parks. The recommendations of the Monroe County Parks and Recreation Plan should be implemented including park maintenance and enhancement, better incorporation of State Park amenities in the planning area by improved connectivity to the community, and identification and improvement where necessary of neighborhood pocket parks. Community facilities such as churches, clubs, athletic associations, civic organizations and other such groups should be identified. The recreational and cultural benefits of these organizations to the community should be encouraged.

Water Access. The County will evaluate existing rights-of-way that terminate at the shoreline in order to determine the County's waterfront site ownership status. The possibility of improving or developing any of these sites to public water access should be evaluated. At the same time, an inventory of neighborhood parks that provide water access should be completed along with the number of residents eligible to join memberships and use these parks. The purchase of more waterfront for public access similar to the Government and Cultural Center site is important and should be completed where possible. With the previously mentioned changeover of publicly accessible waterfront to uses such as condominiums and private marinas, public purchase of some sites may be one way to ensure future available public access. At the same time, some means of encouraging businesses to provide public water access may also be identified and implemented.

Recommended Strategies and Actions

Strategy 9.1

Provide for maintenance and enhancement of active and passive recreational opportunities and for public shoreline access throughout the Key Largo planning area.

Action Item 9.1.1: Implement the recommendations of the Monroe County Parks and Recreation Master Plan within the planning area including improvements to be made at the Garden Cove and Government and Cultural Center sites.

Action Item 9.1.2: Inventory and evaluate neighborhood pocket parks, neighborhood water access and County roads that terminate at the shoreline. Determine if any improvements/expansion is appropriate and how, and program these items into the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Action Item 9.1.3: Water access shall be preserved and maintained in the public interest. Prohibit the abandonment of roads that end at the shoreline, including those listed in Table 6.

Action Item 9.1.4: Identify locations and prioritize land acquisition for small local "pocket-parks" in neighborhoods, which do not have existing public or private recreational facilities within walking distance of the residents being served.

Action Item 9.1.5: Coordinate with state and federal agencies, non-profit organizations, as well as other private and public entities to ensure that passive and active recreational opportunities are being provided to all users, in conformance with standards adopted by the American Disabilities Act.

Strategy 9.2

Develop a system that will guide the acquisition, design, and development of county owned public parks and recreation facilities within the Upper Keys to ensure that the future needs of the community are being met.

Action Item 9.2.1: Establish a Parks and Recreation Forum for the Upper Keys, including representatives from public and private agencies as well as interested citizens who are responsible for overseeing parks and recreation development and to ensure the delivery of effective and efficient services.

Action Item 9.2.2: Build and foster meaningful public and private partnerships within the community to ensure equitable distribution of services throughout the Key Largo MM 97 to MM 107 planning area.

Action Item 9.2.3: Prioritize development and services which will maximize the number of opportunities while accommodating the needs of all users.

Action Item 9.2.4: Utilize available resources and potential funding opportunities to fund capital improvements projects to enhance parks and recreation facilities, services, and operational support.

Strategy 9.3

Enhance current passive recreational areas to provide adequate accessibility and outdoor education opportunities to all users, while maintaining the sensitive natural and cultural resources within the planning area.

Action Item 9.3.1: Provide a variety of appropriate quality passive recreational activities and outdoor educational opportunities where consistent with overarching environmental conservation responsibilities.

Action Item 9.3.2: Design and establish trail improvements to blend with the natural environment. Provide improvements and management practices in sensitive habitats adequate to protect the natural resources.

Action Item 9.3.3: Advocate responsible stewardship of natural resources through the development of an interpretive education program within passive recreational areas.

Action Item 9.3.4: Prioritize the acquisition of public recreational lands to maximize the preservation of scenic vistas, undeveloped views, and access to water resources.

Action Item 9.3.5: Provide a trail system off the U.S. 1 corridor, which posted access points and passive recreational facilities to accommodate appropriate uses that connect existing and future parks to the greatest extent practical.

Strategy 9.4

Protect and maintain all existing public shoreline access points within the planning area.

Action Item 9.4.1: Identify potential shoreline access points and parcels within the planning area.

Action Item 9.4.2: County-owned land with access to the shoreline shall not be abandoned by the county

Action Item 9.4.3: Reclaim county-owned public shoreline access points.

Action Item 9.4.4: Identify and post signage at all public access points whether active or passive sites to identify county ownership and applicable county regulations.

Action Item 9.4.5: Work with interested residents to provide low-impact amenities at public access points within their neighborhoods.

Strategy 9.5

Make additional shoreline access available to the public, which offers opportunities for safe and diverse water-based activities while protecting the integrity of the natural environment and the residential community character.

Action Item 9.5.1: Make the acquisition of land with shoreline access a priority between MM 97 and MM 107.

Action Item 9.5.2: Coordinate work and activity with other agencies and groups, including but not limited to the Florida Keys Overseas Paddling Trail Program, Monroe County Marine Resources, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the DEP Division of Recreation and Parks, to further ensure harmony and consistency with the overall protection and preservation of beaches and shoreline within the county.

Action Item 9.5.3: Investigate amendment of the MCC and develop programs to work with the private sector to acquire, maintain and improve shoreline access for the public.

Action Item 9.5.4: Implement appropriate mechanisms for regulating boating activities located within 300 feet of county owned public land with shoreline access in order to provide appropriate location for diverse water-based recreation activities and to ensure public safety and environmental protection.

Fiscal Implication and Anticipated Capital Improvements Projects

The Parks and Recreation element outlines potential capital improvement projects, from the acquisition of pocket parks to the improvement to existing facilities and shoreline access points. However, to determine costs of the proposals outlined in the plan, the types of facilities the community wants must first be determined. The ongoing Parks and Recreation Master Plan process will shed some light on what improvements or acquisitions need to take place, but until the time that specific projects are identified, a cost estimate is not possible.

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11. COMMUNITY FACILITIES ELEMENT



GOAL TEN

PROVIDE ADEQUATE PUBLIC FACILITIES TO SERVE THE EXISTING AND FUTURE NEEDS OF THE PLANNING AREA.

Current Conditions Summary

Sanitary Sewer. The treatment of sewage and the disposal of wastewater within the study have historically been accomplished either through on-site treatment and disposal using septic tanks or through intermediate sized, privately-owned wastewater treatment package plants. The Comprehensive Plan requires that sewage treatment in the Florida Keys meet Advanced Wastewater Treatment (AWT) criteria in the Keys by 2010. The Key Largo Wastewater Treatment District is currently planning and installing central wastewater collection and treatment services that are expected to meet AWT standards by 2010.

Schools. The Monroe County School Board oversees the public education requirements throughout the entire Florida Keys. The status of school enrollment and capacity is summarized below from the 2004 Monroe County Public Facilities Capacity Assessment Report:

- Service Area – The planning area is included within School Subdistrict 1 which includes Key Largo Elementary/Middle (K-8) and Coral Shores High School (9-12) (serving Key Largo but located in Islamorada outside of the planning area).
- Existing Capacity – The recommended capacity of Key Largo Elementary/Middle is 1,240 students, and Coral Shores High School is 868 students.
- Existing Service – The (2005) current student population of Key Largo Elementary/Middle is 1,003 students, and Coral Shores High School has 792 students.
- Projected Demands – Since 1992 when the student population was 1,310, the elementary and middle school student population has declined, and this trend is expected to continue. During the same timeframe, the high school student population rose. This rise was not in direct proportion with the aging of the student population. The School Board's student enrollment projections do not identify any significant change in student populations.
- Planned Improvements – While overall use at the facility has declined, increased Department of Education (DOE) land requirements have not been met. An additional 43,100 square feet of school space is needed to comply with DOE requirements, but there are site constraints at the elementary school that limit options for expansion.

Potable Water. The Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority (FKAA) is the provider of potable water in Monroe County. The FKAA system uses the Biscayne Aquifer as a groundwater supply from wellfields located west of Florida City, which is located north of Key Largo.

According to the Monroe County Public Facilities Capacity Assessment Report (2004), potable water is provided through a 36-inch diameter pipeline in the planning area. Although countywide demand for potable water increased in the last reporting year by 2%, the report confirms that excess supply is

available in the current SFWMD consumptive use permit to accommodate anticipated increase in demand. The FCAA has a long range capital improvement plan for both the distribution and transmission systems which is expected to provide the needed resources for the planning horizon.

- **Service Area.** The entire planning area is served by the Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority.
- **Existing Capacity.** The FCAA water use permit allows for a maximum of 19.93 MGD average daily withdrawal and a 23.79 MGD maximum daily withdrawal to the Florida Keys.
- **Existing Service.** In 2003, the FCAA distributed an average of 17.29 MGD and a maximum of 22.2 MGD to the Florida Keys.
- **Projected Demands.** The FCAA 2004 projection identifies an average withdrawal of 17.57 MGD and a maximum daily withdrawal of 22 MGD to the Florida Keys.
- **Planned Improvements.** The FCAA has a long range capital improvement plan for both distribution and transmission systems retrofit totaling \$67.5M over the next 5-years. Portions of these projects include planned subdivision distribution system improvements in the planning area to remove galvanized piping.

Fire and Rescue Services. Public safety facilities include the typical services needed for community protection and safety. The following services are provided:

- **Sheriff.** The County Sheriff's Office provides Law Enforcement service to all of the Florida Keys. According to the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) 2003 Total Crime Index, the reported annual crime rate has been dropping in the Florida Keys and declined by 10.4% in the last reporting year.
- **Fire Service.** Stations #24 and #25 of Key Largo Volunteer Fire Rescue, located at MM 107 and MM 99, serve the planning area.
- **Emergency Management Services (EMS).** Monroe County's Emergency Management Services Department serves as the central public information source for any planning area emergency and acts as coordinator in disaster situations. One major function of EMS is hurricane preparedness and emergency evacuation of residents. EMS has designated Key Largo as Evacuation Zone #6. Key Largo Elementary School and St. Justin Catholic Church serve as emergency evacuation shelters for Category 1 and 2 storms.

Analysis of Community Needs

A review of the existing KL-LCP planning area conditions and the 2004 Monroe County Public Facilities Capacity Assessment report identifies the following trends:

- The County's school student population has been decreasing over the past five years. The demand for public school facilities does not appear to be generated by increasing population as projections of student populations remain constant and overall population

age rises. However, the need for improved facilities to meet Department of Education requirements has been documented within the planning area.

- The County's functional population (permanent and seasonal residents) has increased by 3.5% over the past five years. With this increase, the potable water demand for the County has increased by 21% over the past five years. The trend for additional water consumption needs to be reviewed to promote reduced consumption and conservation measures.
- A public sanitary sewer system will continue to be needed and is included in the Sanitary Wastewater Master Plan.
- The Fire Marshall identified the need for increased access and availability of fire wells throughout the planning area.

Recommended Strategies and Actions

Strategy 10.1

Supplement the annual public facilities concurrency report and capital improvements report with a section detailing the status of facilities within the Key Largo planning area.

Strategy 10.2

As part of development and redevelopment efforts within the planning area and as part of implementation of public design improvements, increase the availability of fire suppression facilities according to standards set by the Monroe County Fire Marshall.

Action Item 10.2.1: Bring all residences to within 800 feet of a fire hydrant and all commercial uses within 500 feet of a fire hydrant by working with the Monroe County Fire and Rescue and the Florida Keys Aqueduct authority as the two agencies continue to install hydrants and replace aqueduct pipes.

Action Item 10.2.2: Identify priority areas for pipe upgrading based on a fire needs assessment conducted by Monroe County Fire Rescue Services and work with the Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority to include priority areas into their work plan.

Action Item 10.2.3: Identify necessary fire well and hydrant location during construction plan review and make necessary fire wells and hydrants a requirement of construction plan and building permit approval.

Action Item 10.2.4: Continue the program of the Fire rescue Services to inspect salt water wells annually to determine continuing suitability as a supply of water for fire suppression. Order repair or replacement of fire wells as necessary.

Strategy 10.3

Ensure that new and expanded public facilities are constructed and operated within the planning area according to concurrency and community-identified needs including wastewater handling, stormwater handling, transportation capacity, parks and recreation facilities, library facilities and schools/community facilities.

Action Item 10.3.1: Install a sanitary sewage treatment system in accordance with the Monroe County Sanitary Wastewater Master Plan. Components may include centralized or cluster facilities for collection and treatment, all of which shall be developed on disturbed and/or scarified uplands or in existing rights-of-way. The projected sewage treatment requirements for the planning area should be revisited and confirmed to be consistent with the final development plan adopted pursuant to the Master Plan.

Action Item 10.3.2: Allow installation of stormwater treatment systems in accordance with the Monroe County Stormwater Management Master Plan. Any facilities installed for centralized collection and treatment should be developed on disturbed and/or scarified uplands or in existing rights-of-way.

Fiscal Implications and Anticipated Capital Improvement Projects

The largest know public facilities project to be undertaken by the County over the 20 year planning horizon is the provision of sanitary sewer services to the planning area. According to the Sanitary Wastewater Master Plan, the planning area has several “hot spots” identified for priority installation of sanitary sewer facilities. The Key Largo Wastewater Treatment District is the deciding body for they provision of wastewater service to the planning area.

Improvements are currently underway to the Key Largo Fire Station at MM 107.

12. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT ELEMENT



GOAL ELEVEN
CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THE LOCALIZED SENSE OF COMMUNITY,
WHICH ENCOURAGES CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT, IMPLEMENTATION
AND MONITORING OF THE MASTER PLAN FOR KEY LARGO.

Current Conditions Summary

The Key Largo LCP process included extensive public involvement through newsletters, interview, press releases and workshops. Many of the ideas expressed and the resulting goals formulated will take continued direct involvement from the community to be able implemented.

Analysis of Community Needs

Continued community involvement is needed to update and implement the plan. Input from the community will be needed during future study and design efforts and direct partnering with the community may be needed to implement some identified action items.

Recommended Strategies and Actions

Strategy 11.1

Provide updates to the community on all aspects of plan implementation and the status of public projects in the planning area

Action Item 11.1.1: Continue to distribute information through press releases and the postings on the County web site regarding status of plan and upcoming meetings.

Action Item 11.1.2: Continue to provide speakers to civic and service organizations to discuss LCP Master Plan issues.

Strategy 11.2

Establish a committee to advise the Planning Commission on project proposals within the Key Largo LCP planning area, especially on the US-1 corridor.

Action Item 11.2.1: The Board of County Commissioners shall appoint five to seven committee members to include representatives from the business community, the general citizenry, and design professionals to serve as volunteers reviewing and commenting on plans for projects and improvements within the planning area.

Action Item 11.2.2: The County shall provide administrative support for the committee and all business of the committee shall be conducted in accordance with County and State law regarding conduct of public business.

Strategy 11.3

Develop a detailed staff work program to implement the Key Largo Livable CommuniKeys Master Plan.

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